UNITED
NATIONS

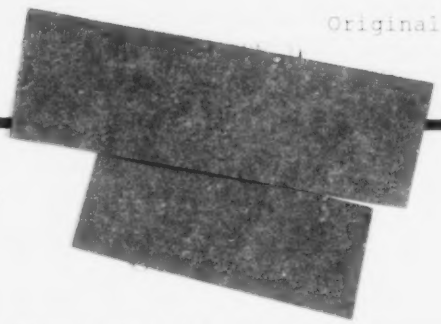
A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/889
9 October 1997

Original: ENGLISH



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-eighth session

ACTION TAKEN ON DECISIONS OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This document provides, in summary form, information on the follow-up by UNHCR on all decisions/conclusions of the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee that called for specific action to be taken by the High Commissioner. The sections and paragraphs referred to below correspond to those contained in the report of the forty-seventh session of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/878). Decisions or conclusions requiring action by Governments or other entities, rather than the High Commissioner, are not reported on. To the maximum extent, Executive Committee and Standing Committee documents have been cross-referenced in order to limit the length of the report.

II. ACTION TAKEN

para. 21: General Conclusion on International Protection

(h) Recognizes that countries of asylum carry a heavy burden, including in particular developing countries with limited resources and those which, due to their location, host large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers; reiterates in this regard its commitment to uphold the principles of international solidarity and burden-sharing and calls on Governments and UNHCR to continue to respond to the assistance needs of refugees until durable solutions are found;

UNHCR action. See: *Social and Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries* (EC/47/SC/CRP.7), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997).

GE.97-02980

(m) Recalls its conclusion 77 (XLVI), which encouraged the High Commissioner to engage in consultations and discussions concerning measures to ensure international protection to all who need it and called on UNHCR to organize informal consultations on this subject; supports UNHCR's activities to date in respect of such consultations and discussions, and encourages UNHCR to continue this process, keeping the Executive Committee informed;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress Report on Informal Consultations on the Provision of International Protection for all who need it* (EC/47/SC/CRP.27), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

(n) Notes with satisfaction UNHCR's activities with regard to the promotion and dissemination of refugee law and protection principles and calls upon the High Commissioner to continue to expand and strengthen the promotion and training activities of the Office, including in the area of prevention and reduction of statelessness and related nationality issues, with the active support of States and through increased cooperation with other international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and other relevant organizations;

UNHCR action. See: *UNHCR's Activities for Refugee Law Promotion, Dissemination and Training* (EC/47/SC/CRP.32), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

(o) Recalls its request that UNHCR support and promote efforts by States towards the development and implementation of criteria and guidelines on responses to persecution specifically aimed at women, welcomes in this context the convening by UNHCR in February 1996 of the Symposium on Gender-Based Persecution, the purpose of which was to share information on States' initiatives in this respect, and encourages UNHCR to continue and strengthen its efforts for the protection of women having a well-founded fear of persecution; and calls on States to adopt an approach that is sensitive to gender-related concerns and which ensures that women whose claims to refugee status are based upon a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons enumerated in the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, including persecution through sexual violence or other gender-related persecution, are recognized as refugees;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress Report on Refugee Women and UNHCR's Framework for Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action* (EC/47/SC/CRP.45), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997), and all regional updates.

(t) Encourages the regular exchange of information as part of the ongoing consultations of UNHCR with Governments and NGOs on resettlement;

UNHCR action. See: *Information Note on UNHCR's Resettlement Handbook* (EC/47/SC/CRP.47), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997).

(v) Encourages UNHCR in this context, in cooperation with other appropriate international organizations, to continue the consultative process initiated in 1995 on the question of how the return process can be facilitated;

UNHCR action. See: *Note on International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.26) and *Return of persons not in need of International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.28), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

(w) Recalling the inter-relationship between protection and solutions, as well as the desirability of prevention, including through the respect for human rights and the implementation of relevant instruments and standards, with particular attention to the responsibilities of States to resolve refugee situations and, especially with respect to countries of origin, to eliminate causes of refugee flows, calls on UNHCR to continue its activities in support of national legal and judicial capacity-building where appropriate, and to cooperate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other relevant organizations in this regard.

UNHCR action. See: *Note on International Protection* (EC/47/SC/CRP.26) and *UNHCR's Activities for Refugee Law Promotion, Dissemination and Training* (EC/47/SC/CRP.32), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 22: Comprehensive and Regional Approaches within a Protection Framework

(f) Invites UNHCR to provide its support and expertise in formulating comprehensive approaches and assisting States in exploring more systematically where and how such approaches might be appropriate and feasible.

UNHCR action. See: *Update on Regional Developments in Central Asia, South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East* (EC/47/SC/CRP.6), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), and *Update on Developments in the Southern African Region* (EC/47/SC/CRP.36), presented at the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 23: Conclusion on the CIS Conference

(n) Calls on the High Commissioner to continue to cooperate with IOM and OSCE in coordinating ongoing and future activities in the countries of the CIS and in steering and monitoring progress through appropriate follow-up mechanisms;

(o) Requests the High Commissioner to keep the Executive Committee informed of measures taken and proposed, and of progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

UNHCR action. See: *Follow-up on the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the CIS Conference* (EC/47/SC/CRP.35), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 24: Conclusion on the Implementation of ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56

(b) Calls on UNHCR to continue its efforts to ensure the full effectiveness of its emergency preparedness and response mechanisms, and urges the Office, in its relations with other intergovernmental and non-governmental agencies, to continue to pursue the development of common standards and practices for responding to emergencies;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(d) Calls on UNHCR to continue to participate actively in the IASC as the primary mechanism for inter-agency decisions on system-wide policy issues relating to humanitarian assistance, for formulating a coherent and timely response to major disasters and complex emergencies, as well as for inter-agency decisions of an operational nature, and urges the Office to play its part in ensuring that the IASC fully develops its foreseen institutional role;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(e) Urges UNHCR to work within the IASC to examine as a matter of priority options and proposals (a) to improve the functioning of the IASC and its Working Group, (b) to strengthen the IASC's role in reaching decisions and providing inter-agency guidance to the United Nations system, and (c) to increase the effectiveness of the IASC Secretariat, including, *inter alia*, through increasing IASC members' support for and involvement in preparations for IASC meetings; and stresses the importance of recommendations to these ends being included in the Secretary-General's report to the 1997 substantive session of ECOSOC;

UNHCR action. See: *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17) and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(f) Calls also on UNHCR to participate actively in the efforts of the IASC to undertake a systematic analysis of various models of coordination, with a view to ascertaining their comparative effectiveness in responding to different situations;

UNHCR action. See: *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17) and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(g) Underscores the importance of establishing Memoranda of Understanding with intergovernmental agencies, including at the level of field operations, as a mechanism to ensure that operations are effective, complementary and predictable; welcomes the recent conclusion of Memoranda of Understanding between UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA; urges UNHCR to continue its efforts to establish predictable operational relationships through the conclusion or enhancement of Memoranda of Understanding and other agreements with relevant partners, notably UNDP and WHO; and calls on the High Commissioner to report to the Standing Committee on lessons learnt from such inter-agency agreements;

UNHCR action. See: *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC, and *Memoranda of Understanding* (EC/47/SC/CRP.51), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997).

(h) Calls on UNHCR to continue its active participation in the consolidated appeals process, urges the Office to support efforts to ensure that consolidated appeals reflect priorities established through joint needs assessments and strategic planning and are effectively coordinated with other resources mobilization efforts, including Round Tables and Consultative Group mechanisms, and stresses the importance to UNHCR of the timely issue of appeals, their alignment with the calendar year and their responsiveness to the regional dimensions of complex emergencies;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17), and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(i) Urges UNHCR to continue to work with the IASC to develop ways of implementing effective and predictable linkages between humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and development in countries of origin and to analyse lessons learnt in this regard;

UNHCR action. See: *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/1997/17) and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC, and *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997).

(m) Calls on UNHCR to continue to participate in efforts, coordinated by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, to ensure that humanitarian agencies have access to early information regarding potential flows of refugees and displaced persons;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997), and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(n) Calls also on UNHCR to continue to collaborate actively with the IASC in its efforts to establish an effective and predictable division of labour in respect of internally displaced persons;

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997); *Draft Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee* (EC/47/SC/CRP.14), presented to the seventh meeting of the Standing Committee (April-May 1997); and *Review of the capacity of the United Nations system for humanitarian assistance, Report of the Secretary-General* (E/1997/98), presented to the 1997 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(r) Recognizes that initiatives to address and resolve the problem of statelessness have an important role to play in the prevention of refugee movements and calls on UNHCR to continue its efforts in this respect;

UNHCR action. See: *Note on UNHCR and Statelessness Activities* (EC/47/SC/CRP.31), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

(t) Calls on UNHCR, in coordination with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, to report to the January meeting of the Standing Committee on progress made in the inter-agency consultations on the formulation of a comprehensive set of proposals, recommendations and options for submission to the substantive session of ECOSOC in 1997.

UNHCR action. See: *Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56* (EC/47/SC/CRP.9), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 25: General Decision on Programme, Administrative and Financial Matters

(b) Requests the High Commissioner, within the resources available, to respond flexibly and efficiently to the needs currently indicated under 1997 General and Special Programmes which are tentatively estimated at $ 1.1 billion, and to any other new needs that might arise, bearing in mind the Statute of the Office and the priority to be accorded to statutory activities, and the relevant provisions of the Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds;

UNHCR action. See: *Overall Programme and Funding Projections for 1996 and 1997* (EC/47/SC/CRP.5), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee; *Draft Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee* (EC/47/SC/CRP.14), *Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1997* (EC/47/SC/CRP.16), presented to the seventh meeting of the Standing Committee (April-May 1997); *Draft Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee* (EC/47/SC/CRP.24) and *Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1997 and Tentative estimates for the 1998 General Programmes Target* (EC/47/SC/CRP.34), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997); *Draft Report of the Eighth Meeting of the Standing Committee (24-26 June 1997)* (EC/47/SC/CRP.40), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997); and *Overview of UNHCR Activities* -

1996-1998 (A/AC.96/884), presented to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (October 1997).

UNHCR action. See: *Internal Audit* (EC/47/SC/CRP.10), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997: *Follow-up to Audit Recommendations on Programme and Financial Issues and the Integrated Management Information System* (EC/47/SC/CRP.20), presented to the seventh meeting of the Standing Committee (April-May 1997); *Update on International Procurement* (EC/47/SC/CRP.33), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997); and *Implementing Partners* (EC/47/SC/CRP.48), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997).

UNHCR action. See: *Implementing Partners* (EC/47/SC/CRP.48), presented to the ninth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 1997), and *Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations of the Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 1996* (A/AC.96/885/Add.1), presented to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (October 1997).

UNHCR action. See: *Internal Audit* (EC/47/SC/CRP.10), presented to the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (January 1997).

UNHCR action. See: *Montbrillant Building: Rental Costs* (EC/47/SC/CRP.1), presented to the fifth meeting of the Standing Committee (December 1996).

para. 26: Decision on Executive Committee Working Methods

(b) Also decides that the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee should be revised to reflect these changes in accordance with the proposals put forward in document A/AC.96/868, annex II;

UNHCR action. See: ***Revised Rules of Procedure*** **(A/AC.96/187/Rev.5).**

(c) Further decides to initiate consultations among Executive Committee members on the participation of NGO observers in the work of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee, bearing in mind revised arrangements for NGO consultation with ECOSOC and further discussions to take place at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly;

UNHCR action. See: ***Progress Report on the Informal Consultations on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Participation in the Work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee*** (EC/47/SC/CRP.21), presented to the seventh meeting of the Standing Committee (April-May 1997) and ***Report on the Informal Consultations on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Participation in the Work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee*** (EC/47/SC/CRP.39), presented to the eighth meeting of the Standing Committee (June 1997).

para. 27: Decision on the Work Programme of the Standing Committee in 1997

(c) Calls on the Standing Committee to report on its work to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee.

UNHCR action. See: ***Report on the Work of the Standing Committee*** (A/AC.96/893), submitted to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee (October 1997).